# JOHNSTONE BENNETT AND HER VALET TELL WHY.

## What Miss Bennett Says.

To W. R. Hearst, New York Journal:

Yes, I have engaged a valet. I have done it because maids are a very useless sort of furniture. I have tried all varieties. They are helpless in about nine out of ten of the emergencies a theatrical woman encounters.

Altogether they count as so much extra baggage. They let their mistresses do all the work. They are more trouble than they are worth.

I do not see anything eccentric in a woman having a valet. She has bags, umbrellas and wraps to be carried. A maid has her hands full to transport her precious self.

A maid is no good in a crowd. You have to spend most of your time finding her. She can't make a way for you in a crush. She can't attend to getting seats, checking baggage, and a thousand of the things that have to be done in travel. She does not know how. The extra help a woman has actually to hire costs more than the maid's salary. A maid is, in most cases, dressy, pompous, and has affairs.

My valet has none of these faults.

He is alert, clever, well trained, and not afraid of work.

There are a thousand things for him to do in a day, from the time he comes in to clean my shoes, build the fire, and lay out my things in the morning, until he turns out the lights and goes away at night.

In the theatre he will be indispensable. I have five changes of costume in my new act. Each must be made in forty seconds. With him in the wings I can know that every garment will be ready.

A fig for what people say about it! People of sense will know that it's a common sense thing to do.

Johnstone Bennett

## What It's All About.

A woman with a valet.

Johnstone Bennett has progressed further in the adaptation of masculine attire to feminine uses than any woman of her age.

She has starched shirts and men's collars and cuffs, which are the envy of chappies on Broadway.

She has trousers pockets in her skirts, and a truly masculine fashion of plunging her hands into the profundities of them.

Now she has done a thing no woman ever did before. She has taken a valet. Hereafter the hotel registers in towns where she plays will show this entry: "Johnstone Bennett and man."

When Manager Price, making up a transportation list of the company which is to open in Philadelphia to-morrow, sent his clerk to Miss Bennett to ask if she proposed taking a maid on the road with her, this answer came back:

"No. I shall not take a maid. I have hired a valet."

Price was dumbfounded and went to the Grenoble Hotel to ask her what in the world she meant.

In the adjoining room, busy among boxes and bundles, packing up little boots and boxes of masculine neckties, folding dresses, coats and costumes which on Saturday were to start out for a season on the road, was a smallish, trim, active young man, dressed in serviceable black.

He had light hair, a pale and smooth-shaven face, deft hands and a quick, quiet way of going about his business. He was a well-trained servant. That was plain, for he apparently heard nothing, saw nothing except the trunks he was at work over and the things which he was engaged in stowing snugly therein.

"What is his name?" asked the manager.

"Louis—Louis Reynal. And he knows his business. He can do more work in an hour than any two maids I ever had. This is no freak. It's business, and it's the best investment I've made in years."

The only parallel to this case is that of a once well-known actor, who for several years kept a maid—a tall, angular, harsh-visaged person with a jaw like Sullivan's and shoulders like those of a hotel porter.

## What the Valet Says.

To W. R. Hearst, New York Journal:

It is all one to me if I am attendant to a gentleman or a lady, though perhaps women are more exacting than men. In a woman's wardrobe there are many trifles which multiply the work necessary to take care of it.

It may be, too, that a woman is more exacting in small matters, and finds more trifling things for an attendant to look after than a man does.

But service is service, and so long as it is well done and well paid for, I do not see any difference whether a man or woman is the employer.

This engagement with Miss Johnstone Bennett is my first employment as valet to a lady. I think it not usual. Even in France, where I was born and lived until recently, I believe it is not customary for a lady to have a man servant.

I was born in the South of France and went to Paris when very young with my father and mother, who were costumers. I was put to service as boy in a merchant's household, and until about six years ago, have always worked as a house servant, travelling with my employers, when they travelled.

Six years ago I was engaged as valet to an English gentleman residing in Paris. Later I went with him to England, and there learned the English language, which I also studied from books.

I came with my former employer to America in 1891, and decided then that I would return here as soon as I could. I am twenty-nine years old, and not married. My father and brother have died since I left France.

I am satisfied with my position.

Louis Reynal



## ELEVEN-YEAR-OLD SOLDIER.

### The Youngest Patriot in the Cuban Army Is Just Four Feet Taff.

The smallest soldier in the Cuban Army is Ramon Fonseca, son of the fighting Colonel Fonseca, whose guerillas worry the Spaniards about the city of Puerto Principe. He is eleven years old, and four feet in height, and weighs about 85 pounds. He has been to school for a part of the time, but he knows more about skirmish lines than he does about arithmetic. He is as familiar with the whirr or Mauser bullets as an American boy is with the chirp of the cricket, and he can look into the flash of a Spanish volley without winking.

Little Ramon's father forbade him to go to the front, so he lived on a farm just outside of Puerto Principe with an uncle who is supposed to be loyal to the Spaniards. One afternoon a few months ago a Spanish column passed by the Fonseca estate, and a hungry soldier slipped from the ranks to forage on his own account. The soldier spied a fine pullet, and laid down his Mauser rifle in the tall grass so as to give chase with greater swiftness.

Little Ramon, who was hid in the house near, saw the act, and made his plan with the promptness of a veteran. He stole from the shed and hid the rifle under some old straw in one of the stores, and then got out of the way as fast as his stocky little legs would carry him.

The soldier danced and swore, and called on the saints until the rear guard was nearly out of sight; then he remembered that Cuba was not a safe place for soldiers straying from the columns, so he captured a pig to make peace with the sergeant and hurried after the column. Ramon said nothing to his parent, but after supper, when it was dark, he shouldered the rifle and started out to find his father's troop in the forests that cover the foothills of the Sierra Najazes.

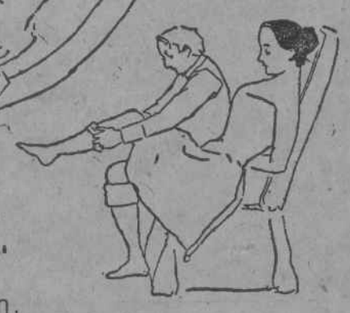
It was a long tramp through the hottest part of Camaguey, laid waste by fire and sword, terribly still, and safe only for the numbers of a party. When he struck from the main road to the woods the darkness became so intense that he lost his way. Boughs of trees struck him in the face, and clinging brambles tripped him and tore his flesh, but he struggled on manfully, still lugging the ten-pound rifle.

The moon rose, and, tired out, he sank under a tree, where he spent the rest of the night. At dawn he got up stiff and hungry, but limped along pluckily, still carrying his precious rifle. The morning wore on and little Ramon still continued his search through the woods. At noon he heard the stamping of unshod horses' hoofs and saw mounted men approaching an opening in the forest. He didn't know whether they were insurgents or the Spanish guerillas, so he hid in a thicket of wild pineapple, and as they came by he gave them the Cuban challenge, "Halto, quien va!" Then he saw the red and blue cockade, and knew that he was among friends. It was a party of scouts of Colonel Fonseca's force, who had started out from camp that morning. Little Ramon was taken on a horse before one of them, and brought back into camp, rifle and all, where he at once became a hero. After his pluckiness Colonel Fonseca had not the heart to send him home, so he gave him a horse, a machete and a pouch of ammunition and enrolled him as a regular soldier of the troop.

At the battle of Saratoga, where the insurgents, under Gomez, for three days stormed the Spanish camp, little Ramon Fonseca rode each day under heavy gun fire in the foremost line of the attacking party. He rode amid the smoke and shot as carelessly as the older soldiers. Men were wounded and fell dead about him, but to him it was pastime to be a real soldier. He has been in other skirmishes since, and his comrades, although they do not let him do guard duty, say that he is about as good a fighting man as any of them.

He is a bright-eyed, cheerful little fellow, and, although he is not up to the weight of his rifle, he carries it still, and shows it with great pride. General Gomez has promised to make him an officer when the war is over.

The boy patriots in the American army have always been a feature, chiefly as drummer boys, and at times they have distinguished themselves for bravery in the thick of the fight. More than one veteran of the civil war is to-day drawing a pension for services when a mere lad in his teens.



## 100 YEARS OF STOVEPIPES.

### The Pot Hat Will Next Year Celebrate Its 100th Anniversary.

Next year will be the anniversary of a great many momentous events.

And not least of them all is this: The high hat, to which a jocular world has given the imperishable name of "stovepipe," will be one hundred years old when 1897 gets here.

Nobody in all the century past has ever succeeded in making plain to the rest of the world what the initial idea of the silk hat was, unless, indeed, it was published and made the vogue for the particular purpose of doing away with the Quaker broad brim.

That unsightly headgear Benjamin Franklin had exported from Philadelphia to Paris, and Paris, quick then as now to ape fashions or the fads of the popular stranger that is within her gates, wore Quaker hats as if that were the chief end of man.

There had been "stovepipe" hats before 1797, but only individual instances, and few of them. The most famous of those early tiles was not a tile at all, but merely a picture of a tile which Albert Durer painted on his portrait of Emperor Maximilian.

Paris at the start went wild over the "stovepipe," and to this day has not gotten over the mania. In some circles in Paris to-day a silk hat makes a gentleman, even if its wearer has a bobtailed coat, an empty pocket and the most questionable of linen.

The Germans learned the high hat habit from France, and went fairly crazy over it. In Russia and Germany both royal orders for its abolishment were issued, but fell flat as the parchment they were written on. The high hat had come to stay.

The Prince of Wales, for the greater part of his high life, has worn nothing else on his head, and the King of the Cannibal Islands considers himself properly crowned and in royal state when his poll is covered by a "dicer."

When the one hundredth birthday of the silk hat comes around New York hatters ought to see to it that some fitting observation is made of it.

## THE STAIR CURE NOW.

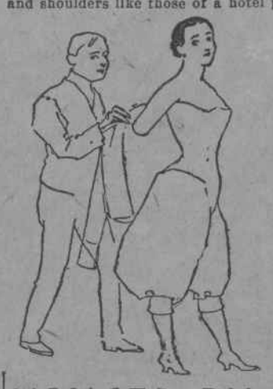
### In London They Say That Stair Climbing Is Good for a Weak Heart.

A new form of regular daily exercise that is being prescribed by more than one London physician is stair climbing. It is recommended for strengthening the heart.

This can only be done by taking regular, systematic and sufficient muscular exercise. Let a person who finds his pulse increased fifty to sixty beats in a minute after mounting a staircase, climb a hundred staircases day after day for a month or more, and, it is said, he will find that the exertion does not add ten beats to the normal number of his heart throbs.

The exercise has acted upon this vital organ just as it does on the biceps of a prize fighter or a blacksmith, and strength and the capacity for endurance have been the result. But this is not all the good to be gained by climbing a hundred staircases a day, say fifty in the morning and fifty in the afternoon. Doubtless the person with a weak heart has suffered more or less from what is called nervous dyspepsia. His food, instead of being properly digested, has been mainly fermented in his stomach, and has caused him various uncomfortable feelings, which he has been in the habit of attributing to everything but their proper cause.

It is claimed that not only have the hundred minutes so spent in climbing staircases put strength into his legs, expanded his chest, and saved his heart from fatty degeneration, but that they have given tone to his abdominal muscles and to his digestive organs.



## HANGED BY HER HAIR.

### A Sunday Bicyclist Nearly Shares the Fate of Absalom.

Like Absalom, the son of David, Miss Mary Gilmore, of Gower, Ill., was caught by the hair in the boughs of an oak tree. Fortunately, there was no Joab in pursuit of her, but only kind friends who rescued her from a position in which her life was really endangered.

Inasmuch as the accident occurred on Sunday, and Miss Gilmore was riding a bicycle, at the time, the repetition of the famous Scriptural incident is considered of deep significance. Her family is a devoutly religious one.

Absalom, it will be recalled, had committed the sin of inciting the people of Israel to rebellion against the King, his father. He was the best beloved son of his father, and in all Israel there was none to be so much praised as Absalom for his beauty. And when he polled his head he weighed the hair at 200 shekels after the King's weight.

After Absalom's rebellion had been crushed, he was riding away, and the mule went under the thick boughs of a great oak, and his hair caught hold of the oak, and he was taken up between the heaven and the earth; and the mule that was under him went away.

And Joab took three darts in his hand and thrust them through the heart of Absalom while he was yet alive in the midst of the oak.

The parallel between the case of Absalom and that of Miss Gilmore is very close. She also had disobeyed her parents, but as the offence was not so great the punishment was quite appropriately less. But it will deter her from Sunday riding in future.

Sunday afternoon Miss Gilmore mounted her wheel for a ride about the neighborhood for the sake of the exercise it afforded. She was not accompanied by any one, and took the road toward Lemont, which passes through an undulating prairie and well-wooded section. When she did not return at supper time her parents became alarmed and made inquiries as to which direction she had taken. A young man who had seen her take the Lemont road gave the desired information, and her father quickly hitched his horses to a carriage and set after her. After riding about three miles he came to a portion of the road where there is a long down grade and trees overhanging the road.

While going down the hill he was startled to see a figure apparently hanging from a tree some distance ahead, near a side path. As he came near by he heard moans, and, alighting hastily, found his daughter with her hair firmly caught about the limb of a large oak tree, which overhangs the footpath at that point.

The limb was so high from the ground that the young woman was barely able to support her weight on her toes. She was almost exhausted when found by her father, and probably could not have withstood the strain for ten minutes longer.

Mr. Gilmore cut her hair away from the limb with his pocket knife, and placing the almost fainting girl in his carriage, drove rapidly home.

Miss Gilmore has recovered from the shock, but declares she will never again ride her wheel on Sunday.

## FACTS ABOUT SPONGES.

### Some of the Finest Varieties Are Found Now in the Waters of Florida.

Some of the finest kinds of sponges are found in Florida waters, and the culturist would find profit in raising such species as the "sheep's wool," the "velvet," the "hard head" and the "grass" sponge. Some of the kinds recognized as quite distinct are, nevertheless, so much alike in appearance that only an expert can tell them apart. The sheep's wool sponges are best of all for the bath.

It is a fact worth knowing that it pays very much better to buy unbleached sponges. The bleached ones look much prettier, but the chloride of lime employed in the process injures the skeleton, and lessens its strength so that it soon comes to pieces. When you find sand in a sponge, you may know that you are indebted to trade dishonesty. Sponges never grow on a sandy bottom. The sand is added in the bales to make them weigh more.

The sponges are gathered by small boats. In each boat are two men; one sculls, while the other leans over the bow. When he sees a sponge, he spears it and drags it aboard. If the water is rough, he uses a "water glass," which is simply an ordinary pail with a glass bottom. The pail is hung around the neck of the fisherman, who sinks it below the surface when he wishes to see. In this way he can get a perfect view of the bottom. In the Mediterranean sponges are collected usually by dredges, but sometimes by naked divers.

The sponges of commerce are warm water animals. They come chiefly from the Mediterranean, the Red Sea, the Bahamas, and Florida.

## TEN POUND BICYCLES.

### This Scientist Secures Lightness by Inflating Wheels with Gas.

People who ride bicycles do not need to worry hereafter as to whether the machine they buy is light or heavy. Professor W. H. Morse, of Westfield, N. J., has just made a little discovery which he firmly believes will decrease the weight of any wheel.

Wheels that were heavy before will now be light, and those that were light will be somewhat of the weight of feathers. Providing, of course, their owners follow the inventor's plan. It will not be hard for them to do this, for about all that is needed, in the first place, is a long rubber pipe, and in the next, a working gas burner.

For a considerable while Professor Morse has been experimenting by inflating bicycle tires with different gases and combinations of gases. These, when used, he has discovered, materially lessened the weight of the machine. In the majority of cases, however, the gas ruined the rubber of the tires and after a few days rendered them useless.

After many experiments, however, and after trying every conceivable combination known to chemists, the experimenter found that when the tires of the machine were inflated with hydrogen gas the weight of the machine was reduced eight pounds. A considerably greater reduction in weight was accomplished when compound oxygen gas was used as an inflating gas.

Professor Morse now hopes to arrange a combination of gases by which the weight of the machine can be still further reduced without any injury to the tires of the wheel. He claims that with an aluminum frame wheel, inflated with the proper combination of gases, the entire machine can be put on the road or track at a weight under ten pounds.

When the proper combination of gases cannot be had, a long tube attached to a gas burner and to the tire of the wheel answers the same purpose. It has been found that illuminating gas is much better than air for inflating the tires, and, at the same time, it materially lessens the weight of the machine.

ALMOST HANGED BY THE HAIR.

## TO BEFRIEND EX-CONVICTS.

### Mrs. Baffington Booth's Novel Plan to Help Prisoners When Released.

Mrs. Ballington Booth, of the Salvation Army, has a new scheme to help ex-convicts.

The finger of scorn is no longer to be pointed at them. Men who have been in Sing Sing Prison and who desire to live good and upright lives will in future have a chance to do so. They will have a chance to start life all over again.

Mrs. Ballington Booth proposes to welcome such convicts right at the gate of Sing Sing Prison. She will offer them home, friends and employment.

The first thing necessary for carrying out this plan was a means of transportation for released convicts from Sing Sing to the Volunteers' place of refuge. She will have a steam launch in commission as soon as the purchase money has been secured. The boat will be called the Omer Sage, in honor of Warden Sage, and will be manned by ex-convicts. A pretty Volunteer lassie will be in command. The captain that has been selected is an expert sailor, and with her at the wheel, the little vessel filled with earnest Volunteers and happy ex-prisoners, will soon be seen darting over the neighboring waters on its mission of mercy and succor.

Among the Volunteers the men who are earnestly trying to live down their past will be given every opportunity not only to help themselves, but also to help others of their class. Mrs. Booth believes that men who have been prison mates must have more or less feeling for each other, and that the influence of men who have for some time been free in their treatment of a recently discharged convict can only be for good.

Another reason for using a launch to receive the men, instead of allowing them to leave Sing Sing by train, is that they may avoid all possible chance of recognition. Then, again, the sail down the Hudson River is a trip likely to be impressive by the grandeur of the scenery. In the estimation of Mrs. Booth, if ever a man can be in a position to appreciate such scenes, and so open the way for serious thought of the past and future, it is just after leaving the tomblike cells of Sing Sing and sailing, a free man once more, down the grandest river in America.

On leaving Sing Sing the vessel will set out for "Hope Hall," which is the name selected for the commodious home over which Mrs. Booth has supervision. Those who are not in good health, owing to confinement and prison fare, or from whatever cause, will be given employment at this sylvan retreat near the banks of the Hudson.

"In thinking of the hopelessness of the future of the great army of discharged criminals who walk out of prison gates every year, branded as enemies to society and law, I believe I have at last conceived a plan," said Mrs. Booth, "by which I hope to in a great measure remove the ban from this class of unfortunates. Many a man on his return to freedom means honestly to try and redeem his evil life, to be, in short, a man. But how to go about it? What can he do with the stain of prison bars upon him, to earn an honest living? Who will employ a man whom the law has caused to be confined because he is a menace to the lives and property of his fellow-men?"

Mrs. Booth has made an arrangement with Warden Sage by which her representatives shall be informed of the exact time of the departure of prisoners.

A truck farm is to be a feature of Hope Hall, and in out-of-door work men who have so long been shut in by stone walls and iron bars will undergo physical and mental rehabilitation. In this way those who are experienced in the handling of vessels and those who show aptitude for farming and gardening will be given permanent employment on the launch and about the grounds of the hall, should they desire it.

"We confidently hope," said Mrs. Booth, "that the feeling of self-reliance which congenial toil will inspire in these outcasts will serve to arouse their self-respect and restrain them from ever falling back into their old vicious ways. Instead of being subjected to humiliating suspicion on their return to freedom, these men will find with us a comfortable home, in which they will be surrounded by elevating influences."

YOUNGEST PATRIOT IN THE CUBAN ARMY